CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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FROM THE EXPOSITOR.

WHAT IS RELIGION?

It is a very late hour in the day, one would think, to propose the question—What is religion? It is, indeed, lamentable, if not strange, that, after a lapse of nearly two thousand years since the Christian faith was revealed—after all the controversies which have been carried on, the official decisions that have been pronounced, the treatises and commentaries which have been written—there should yet be any possible need of asking, in a land of enlightened Christians, What is religion, as revealed and recommended by Jesus Christ and his apostles? Was it not distinctly and explicitly taught by its author? We all say it was. And did not his disciples and apostles themselves understand and plainly make known to others the very soul and body, so to speak, of the Christian religion? There is no doubt of it. And, with the Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles all before us—with all of which we are as familiar as with household words—are people not yet agreed as to this originally plain and simple subject? Even such is the fact. The causes may be various. It is one of the easiest things in the world, for pride and passion to carry people away from the simplicity there is in Christ; to make them run so far, indeed, in the course of centuries, as that they shall quite lose sight of the original thing. If it were not so in this case, probably there would be little or no disagreement at this late day, amongst honest and intelligent men, on the main subject. But we are obliged to take things as we find them. There is, all about us, much disagreement. The world is divided into sects. The materials for controversy are as wide spread and as ample as they ever were. We trust, indeed, that reaction has commenced, and that the tendency is more to the centre and less to the circumference than formerly. Discoveries are being made. Improvements are going on. The different sects are gradually, though as covertly as possible, repudiating their exposed errors, and lopping off their excrescences. To speak chemically, the attraction of cohesion is taking the place of that of repulsion; or, astronomically—the centripetal force is regaining its equilibrium against the allowed freaks of the centrifugal. Still there is a mighty commotion. There is a whirlpool of waters. There are currents and counter-currents. The world is disagreed. The question, then, must still be asked—What is religion?

We have some remarks to offer upon this subject. Though much is written and said about religion in the present day, the most, we fear, is indeed, *about* it. We fear that much less is known or practiced of the thing itself. That which engages the most solicitude and attention may be a religion, which

'Plays round the head, but comes not near the heart,'

A religion which has no *necessary* connexion with actual goodness; but which is ambitious chiefly for display. It does seem to us, that, in the pursuit of religion, as generally in the pursuit of happiness by other and less certain means, it has become quite too fashionable to go away from home; to seek for foreign products; to hanker after something novel and strange; to overlook and slight the things about us, the common blessings and ordinary means that are accessible to all, and to place a supreme value upon exotics; in short, to leave the substance in a restless and an eager pursuit of shadows; to depart from home, where, if anywhere, happiness must be found, and to roam over the world, like the eyes of the fool, after its tinselled counterfeits. This we fear, is too much the character of the religion which now makes so much noise and display in the world. It spurns things within ordinary reach; desires chiefly the marvellous and the extravagant; ranges abroad for what can be found only within one's own heart; and its professors, it may be, are like some censured in scripture, 'forever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.'

In justification of these remarks, let us inquire—What is religion, as it seems to be understood by those who claim to be its exclusive patrons, and who are certainly the most active in endeavoring to extend it through the world? It is, as contended, a mysterious and radical change of the heart, which, though it may be followed by a corresponding alteration in the external conduct, does not necessarily imply, as it is not generally accompanied by, such a change. The person, first of all, is taught to look upon his Maker as his incensed enemy; to contemplate the miserable doom which awaits him; to fear and tremble in view of God and hell, and to seek an escape from the fury of the former and the jaws of the latter, through repentance, faith and a connexion with the visible church, the real ark of safety. The object to be accomplished by this change, and the causes which operate to produce it, are all distant and foreign. Religion is supposed to be necessary, not primarily on account of its present benefits, but chiefly, if not altogether, on account of an evil to be averted or a good to be secured in the future world. The terrors, too, by which the subject is made to feel the necessity of thus providing for the destinies of eternity, are all foreign. They are brought from the invisible world.—The imagination and not the understanding, supplies the materials by which the transformation is accomplished. All is distant—all foreign. Little concern is felt on account of present effects, and but a subordinate value placed upon religion as pertaining to the duties and enjoyments of the present life.

Now we believe, that this propensity to run after foreign objects, this building upon the imagination rather than upon an improved understanding, is prejudicial to the cause of truth, virtue and human happiness. It leads people to overlook the hell in their own bosoms, to avoid a local hell in another state of existence; to slight the happiness of a pure mind, to secure a seat in a local heaven. The happiness or misery which men must enjoy or suffer, are in their own souls, and they can never run away from either. No change of place in this world, no change of existence from this to the next, can carry away or avert that hell which hath its lowest foundations in an impure and unsanctified heart.

The consequences of such views of religion are, that people rely more upon the imagination than upon the understanding, and think less of inward and substantial good, than upon outward and specious rewards. The duties of this life are therefore neglected, in the great and sole concern to provide for the happiness of another. We have said that religion, as explained in the present day, has no *necessary* connexion with actual practical goodness. We said this, because, according to the explanation, practical goodness, which is quite intelligible, is one thing; religion, which is quite unintelligible—a mysterious and awful subject, is another.—They are not the same thing. They may exist together, but the connexion is not necessary. Hence, as we all know, people may obtain the reputation of being very religious, though it does not necessarily follow that they are, *therefore*, any better as citizens and neighbors than others who are not allowed, or do not chose to claim, this reputation. Some one has said, and there is certainly too much occasion for the remark, that, though we hear such a person is a *religious* man, we have still to inquire, Is he an honest man? The idea is, that religion and moral goodness are regarded as different and distinct things, having no necessary connexion one with the other.

Another evil resulting from this mistaken view of religion, is, that it furnishes an opportunity for hypocrisy and counterfeits. It can be made a cloak to cover up and even recommend a character that is actually unworthy and dishonest. The religion which is now current in the world, may, with the greatest ease, be counterfeited; and we do fear that more of it in this spurious form is circulated, than of the genuine coin. Whilst religion is regarded as something distinct from actual goodness of heart and character, the profession may be assumed as a sort of passport to the confidence, favor, and honor of the public. Now, if religon were every where made to consist in purity of heart and in deeds of benevolence, there could be but little danger of impositions of this kind. The world, bad as it has been represented, and bad as it may really be, will always do homage to virtue, and will seldom judge amiss when it makes the conduct of individuals the rule of its opinion concerning them. When we judge a tree by its fruit, the judgment is always correct; but when we judge it by its foliage or its flowers, we often get deceived. Herein we perceive the excellency of our Savior's rule, to judge the tree by its fruit, or to judge as to the religion of mankind, not by their professions, but by the the actual good they do in society. 'Every one that *doeth* righteousness, *is* righteous, even as He is righteous.'

Another evil resulting from a religion of the passions, is, that it deals chiefly in the marvellous and the mysterious, and generates excitements and tumults in society, which leave people little time, and it may be as little inclination, to prosecute the domestic, social and relative duties of life. In this way, it not only supersedes the necessity of that genuine religion which consists in a faithful attention to the duties of life, but is indirectly at war with it. Men who decide and act under the influence of excitement, generally go beyond the proper sphere of duty. Those who give up to passion what was meant for the understanding, are in danger of becoming intoxicated, and then behaving unseemly.

Now, too much of the religion of the present day is the creature of excitement, the offspring of heated and inflated passions. Indeed, the passions are about the only mental properties which are addressed in the attempt to convert

people to religion. The passion of fear, particularly, is operated upon by all the imaginary terrors which ingenuity can invent. And though St. John says, 'he that feareth is not made perfect in love,' that is, in religion; and that, 'fear hath torment;' modern religionists act as if fear was the only thing by which men can be made perfect in religion, and that a religion *without* 'torment' is nothing worth. No doubt a rational fear, a fear of what is really to be apprehended, a fear which understanding, and not the imagination, begets, may be profitable, if held under the restraints of reason and propriety. But frightened men seldom act under the influence of sound discretion. In religion, if any where, the mind should be free to investigate and act according to the dictates of a clear understanding. Here, if any where, extravagance and dissipation should find no countenance; for religion itself is a very serious and important concern. It requires calm, cool, deliberate thought and action.

Most men are fond of the marvellous, and have a propensity to some extreme. They are enamored with the relations of the wonderful and mysterious, and plain common sense they regard as hardly deserving attention. It is to this propensity no doubt, that we are to trace the origin of those tumults which almost periodically arise in different parts of our country, and which sweep over the land like, what Dr. Beecher once honestly and pertinently denominated 'moral desolation.' Excitements of this sort, like excitements of almost all other kinds, are contagious. Especially is an excitement created by fear and terror, calculated to communicate itself, like the shock from an electric battery, to all kindred minds. There are mental as well as bodily contagions, and in their effects, the former are often as disastrous and fatal as the latter. We could put up with the existence of these mental disorders better, if the spiritual physicians were as anxious as are those whose pofesssion it is to heal the diseases of the corporeal system, to arrest their progress and effect a cure. But strangely and unfortunately, such is not the fact. While in the one case, the physician applies all his skill to check the spread of the disease, and to cure, or mitigate its severity, in the other, none are thought deserving of the doctorate who do not regard it as a paramount duty to aid in extending the infection and inflaming the causes which contribute to its blackest type. Well would it be for society, would the 'physicians of souls' take a lesson from the physicians of bodies. We might then hope to see religion exist in a more healthy state among us. Instead of endeavoring to increase the fever, we should then find them applying something to cool and subdue it. As it is now, excitement is the order of the day; and the more violent and extravagant the better. In such a state of things, we cannot reasonably expect that real religion will flourish in the community.

To a candid and ingenuous mind, it is always painful to pass an unfavorable judgment on any class of people. Charity, which is a supreme law in Christian faith and morals, requires from us the most favorable opinion of others which facts will authorize. That most of the subjects of revivals, so called, are sincere and honest, we never had a disposition to doubt. At the same time, facts—palpable ones—are before the public, which compel us to fear, that the principal authors of these excitements are, too many of them at least, governed in their operations by selfish or sectarian considerations. We do fear that real, vital and practical goodness is made of less account in their calculation, than the gaining of numerical strength to rival parties and sects.

As one proof of this, we may remark, that when a new convert 'experiences religion,' we do not find that so much pains are taken by his spiritual tutors to induce him to go immediately forth to the honorable fulfilment of his long neglected duties and obligations to his fellows, as to urge him forward into a connexion with the visible church. Having accomplished this, the great object seems to have been attained: and being now secured in the fold, he is dieted to his new condition, and carefully chained to his place, whilst his shepherd saunters forth in quest of new proselytes. In due time, when the harvest is over, we see the religious journals filled with the wonderful accounts, *not* of the practical *good* which has been produced by the revival, but of the *numbers* who have joined the church. The numerical accessions obtained, are always called plainly, 'the fruits' of the excitements: a confession plain enough, that what are regarded as the chief good, the real 'fruits,' are the accessions which are made to a party.

If such are the motives, we hesitate not to say, they are dishonorable and unworthy. If revivals bear no better 'fruits' than the giving strength to this or that party, we well may suspect their genuineness. The fruits of religion do not consist in party attachments and antipathies; in following after this man, and in avoiding and hating others. Far from this. They consist in practical goodness, in love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance, (Gal. v, 22, 23.) When these fruits are not found, we are authorized, by the rule of Jesus Christ, to judge the tree corrupt and unprofitable.

We have remarked in another place, that a great deal is said in this age *about* religion. It s the subject of many a warm controversy, and the occasion of much bitterness and strife in society; often setting chief friends against each other, and sowing the seeds of discord in neighborhoods. And it has seemed strange to us, that it has not more frequently occurred to those concerned in such a religion, that the whole must be a deception and a counterfeit, whenever such fruits result from it. For it is impossible in the nature of the thing, that real religion can be concerned in any effects like these.

But after all that is said and and done about religion, is it not remarkable that people yet appear to be as much in the dark, as to what true religion is, as ever. Lo, here! says one. Lo, there! says another. A third points to the sanctuary, a fourth to the wilderness. Is it possible that people have never read a full, plain and intelligible definition of religion, recorded in James i, 27? Or are they determined not to receive his exposition of this important word? This apostle, it seems to us, has put the question, as to what the real religion of the New Testament is, altogether beyond controversy. And what does he say it is? Let us hear: 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.' Need any thing—can any thing—be more plain and conclusive than this? Whence, then, all the controversy which has arisen on so intelligible and well settled a subject?

We are sensible that *such* an explanation of religion as St. James has given, must be disagreeable to many warm tempered minds. It is, indeed, like a flood of cold waters poured on a prairie of wildfire. Nevertheless, if we admit the apostle's authority, we must accept the definition, rational as it is, and suspicious as it may be to *some* minds on this account.

To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, is benevolence. To keep one's self unspotted from the world, is uprightness of conduct. Benevolence, therefore, toward the afflicted and needy, and an unspotted character for uprightness, in itself, constitute the sum of religion, according to the apostolic sense of that important word. That such as are wedded to an impure and a defiled religion, should be satisfied with a definition that so suddenly and so effectually puts to flight all their love of the marvellous and mysterious on the subject, is not to be expected. Not allowing it to be a test of Christian character in the individual, or a passport to Christian fellowship, it is not wonderful that they should cast it aside as altogether insufficient and unclean. It has nothing in it calculated to inflame the passions, or to draw the multitude away from the practical duties of life to run after those who are intent on making proselytes and building up a party. But those who would know and enjoy the benefits of *pure* and *undefiled* religion, will not be slow to accept the apostle's definition, and judge men to be religious only as they exhibit the deeds of benevolence and uprightness. This is the test of religion—we mean, of course, that which is pure and undefiled. All else we are safe in accounting spurious.

Would any know the power and enjoy the fruits of genuine religion? Let us, then, exhort them to maintain characters of benevolence and uprightness. Let them be satisfied with nothing short of actual, practical goodness. Depend upon it, nothing else, not all the professions we may make, not all the outward service we may perform, will supply the place of this. And in the maintenance of such a character, though they may be denounced and disfellowship by others, they may be assured, not only of the approving voice of a good conscience, but also of the smiles and favor of Heaven. In the practical exercise of this religion they will merit the confidence of mankind, and secure the blessings of almighty God. W. A. D.

PERSECUTION.

I have before me the '*Book of Martyrs*,' so called, giving an account of those that have suffered martyrdom, from Jesus Christ, down to the recent persecutions of the protestants in the south of France—originally compiled by the Rev. J. Fox, A. M. and now improved by important alterations and additions, by Rev. C. A. Goodrich, of Berlin.

Mr. Goodrich is a clergyman of the Calvinistic order, and is well known to the public as a man of science, learning and historical information. He is the author, I believe, of a Geography, which has been highly approved, and also of a Family Encyclopedia; of the merits of which, however, I am not prepared to judge so correctly as of other works of his. Suffice it to say, his popularity is such as to give his opinions considerable influence, whether they are true or false. The work before me contains a preface, as I suppose, from his pen, to which all protestants will most cheerfully subscribe. The following is an extract from it:

'It may be said, indeed it is said, that the persecuting spirit of popery has passed away.—But let it be remembered that persecution is *inseparable* from it—is its very *essence*. A church which pretends to be *infallible*, will always seek the destruction of those, who dissent from it.

* * * Until some further proof is given to the world, than has yet been given of the more mild and pacific spirit of popery, we shall believe that it is still as intolerant, as when it spread its desolating ravages, through the unoffending vallies of Piedmont; or, at a subsequent period, lighted up the consuming fires of Smithfield.'

What can be more true? Persecution is inseparable from a system that claims infallibility, and denies the right of dissension. This is an unalterable truth. But is Mr. Goodrich aware, that Presbyterianism is a branch of popery? And is it not true, that if the 'root be unholy so

so are the branches?' Calvin came out from among the Papists, and by his conduct, shewed plainly, that however much of their doctrines he had discarded, he still claimed infallibility as much as the Pope. Else why was the amiable Servetus burned at the stake.

We would fain ask Mr. Goodrich, or any other gentleman, that feels competent to answer the question, how many shades of difference there are, between old fashioned popery and the Calvinism of the present day? Do not the Calvinists have a creed, which they believe so near infallibility, that they receive it as the rule of faith and practice, as the only medium of church fellowship? If a member profess to believe the Bible, and to reject the creed, is he not forthwith excommunicated? Are not those who deny Calvinism 'root and branch,' viewed as reprobates?—'children of wrath?' To all these questions, the answer must be in the affirmative. Where, then, is the important difference?

It is true that Calvinists in this country have not used all the apparatus of torture, that were invented by the papists. But have they discovered no disposition to practice under other forms what they decidedly deprecate? Will the history of Witches, Quakers and Baptists in the early settlement of this country, show that the order with which Mr. G. is connected are totally averse to persecution? I will not charge him nor his cotemporaries with the crimes of their predecessors; but I will ask him to look at their history for the last two years: yea, I will confine it to the town of Berlin; and beg him to tell us, whether his brethren have not oppressed and prescecuted the order with which the writer is connected. He cannot, he dare not say, no.

In justice to himself, we adjure him to look at this matter again. We will take the liberty of suggesting to him an opinion which seems to be faithfully confirmed by the history of the past—viz. that it is the doctrine of endless misery or of a partial God, done up in an infallible creed, that leads to persecution. Calvin believed that God would roast Servetus to all eternity in fire and brimstone; how could he be more like his father, than by making an early commencement of the horrid scene!

But I must close. I have written thus much, for the purpose of shewing, that as there is no material difference between the distinguishing features of Popery and Calvinism, so there can be but little difference in their effects on society. If Mr. Goodrich or any one else will show us wherein we are wrong, we shall be ready to acknowledge it as a special kindness.—*Religious Inquirer.*

KNOWLEDGE THE FOUNDATION OF LOVE.

The apostle Paul in his epistle to the church of Phillippi, says, 'And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and judgment.' This is a passage which every Christian would do well to have perpetually in his remembrance, because it expresses in a very striking manner, the nature of the religion he professes. It is emphatically a *religion of love.* Its first and great commandment is, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and mind and strength.' And the second is like unto it—'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' But while the great object of Christianity is to awaken and strengthen the affections of the heart, it designs to call forth no attachment towards either God or man, but what has its foundation in *knowledge and in judgment.*

There is a possibility of paying reverence and adoration to a being, who may have existence only in the imagination, in the mistaken lessons of education, or in the natural tendency of the human mind to superstition. The apostle Paul charged the Athenians with being too superstitious, in that they worshipped an unknown God; and adds, 'Whom ye *ignorantly* worship, Him declare I unto you.' Our Savior also reproached the Samaritans for worshipping *they knew not what.* By thus misplacing the affections on objects which have no real existence, or if they have, are unworthy of admiration, the mind must necessarily become perverted, and instead of finding nutriment and strength in the homage it renders, is filled with the most dark and illiberal superstitions. It need not be inquired whether the popular religious sects of the present day found their love for God, on their knowledge and judgment of his character. They make no claim to this. And not only so, but they assert that it is presumptuous in us to judge of him. They profess to love God, because they are commanded to do so. It is true, God has commanded us to love him; and that is a reason why we should do so; but not the only reason. The query is, *why* has God commanded it? He enjoins no commandments, without accompanying them with sufficient reasons for their being observed. But here it is, they would preclude inquiry. We are forbidden to learn of God or the motives of his conduct, because, forsooth, it is too presumptuous! The fool, say the Scriptures, hath said in his heart, there is no God; and I cannot conceive that the man is a whit wiser, who professes love for a God, without knowing why or whether he is an object of love. It is from this cause, the shutting out of the Divine character from the understandings of men, that have arisen those slavish superstitions and debasing errors, which have these many years taken shelter under the wings of Christianity. The character of God is the foundation of all true religion; and if this be removed, the whole superstructure must tumble to the ground. But so long as this is unobscured—so long as our conceptions of him have their foundation in knowledge and correct judgment, the pillars of truth are firm, the interests of religion are secure. And this, so far from being presumption in us, is what we are absolutely called upon to do. The language of God is, 'Come now and let us *reason together*, saith the Lord,' &c. Again; 'Judge ye men of Judah, I pray you, between me and my vineyard,' &c. And the earnest prayer of the apostle for his brethern at Phillippi was, that their love might abound yet *more and more in knowledge and judgment.* The more we know of the Divine character, the more enlightened our judgment is concerning it, the purer must be our affections, our admiration and love; and the greater the measure of their extent. See to it then, my brethren, that your love aboundeth, and that it be that rational love, which springs from knowledge and judgment.—*Pioneer and Visiter.*

[The following appropriate remarks on the value of religious Periodicals, are from the "Universalist," published at Boston. It cannot be denied that periodicals are now exerting an important influence in promoting our cause. Probably no single measure could be adopted of greater utility. Let individuals then aid their circulation by every proper means in their power. We would particularly recommend the subject to our own patrons. Let them reflect on it themselves, and present it to their friends. Let them introduce as many different papers as possible into each neighborhood, and by this means they can do *much*, at little expense and trouble to themselves.] P.

RELIGIOUS NEWSPAPERS.

Among the various plans devised for the dissemination of religious sentiments, I know of no one better calculated to effect the object than that of periodicals. True, the press, like every thing else, may be perverted and abused. It is employed for the best as well as the worst purposes. It is a powerful engine, and may be turned to the aid of vice or virtue. It is never better used than when employed in defending the character of God. For this purpose, it is our duty as Universalists to use it. It remains for us to lay hold on this method of communication, and bring it to bear on the cause of truth.—Within the last few years, various periodicals have started into existence. Some have died and others have gained sufficient strength to live, and acquire a reputation. Whether this multiplication of newspapers is advantageous or not, I leave for others to determine. My object now is, to state some reasons why the press should be encouraged.

1. Periodicals are like winged messengers. They can and will go where living teachers have never been. Many will read them who would not hear the same sentiments from the pulpit. Converts have been multiplied in many places solely by the influence of newspapers. In many places in our country our doctrine is found springing up, and in a flourishing condition, where preachers have never been. Indeed, our doctrine does a great deal for itself. Wherever it goes, it carries a kind of authority and majesty which causes its claims to be felt and acknowledged. This sentiment has spread itself so widely that it goes before its advocates, and we have but to follow to nourish and strengthen what has already taken deep root. Not so with endless misery.—It does nothing for itself. Its believers must do every thing for it. Like the gods of the heathen, it cannot help itself. Its worshipers must support it or it would soon cease to have an existence. He that advocates this must go in opposition to nature, God and the Bible. As a sect then, Universalists should take courage, and aid in supporting the weekly heralds sent forth from the press. It is not enough that we may be strong in the faith. We must remember others are not so.

2. But I am reminded by some that they are poor, and therefore cannot take a religious paper. If you are poor then I would advise you, by all means, to subscribe for a periodical. You will in this way lay out your hard earnings to a good purpose; for at the end of the year you will have a volume that will be worth more to you than the money which you paid. Besides; there are various ways in which you will spend in a trifling manner a far greater sum than is asked for a newspaper.

Besides; you have a family perhaps. Think then of the immense advantage that will result to them from a perusal of a work devoted to the doctrine of impartial love and good works. A taste for reading will be of more real advantage to your children than a fortune; and in what better way can such a taste be created than by presenting weekly before them a well filled sheet of interesting intelligence.

3. Perhaps you reside in a part of the country where you are not favored with the voice of a preacher on the Sabbath; or where you cannot hear the impartial love of God set forth.—How refreshing then must be a paper wholly devoted to the inculcation of this sentiment. Depend on it, if you once subscribe for a paper devoted to the blessed doctrine of a world's salvation that you will never regret the act. In no way can you do yourselves more good. Years after your volumes are completed, you may read them with increasing pleasure. They will contain a faithful history of the rise and progress of a doctrine which reflects the highest honor on God, and gives the greatest peace and joy to man. Our sect is now passing through the fires of a moral revolution, and it becomes necessary that a faithful record should be preserved of its strugglings in its infant state, that when it reaches its manhood, the labors of its founders may not be forgotten.

RICHES OF THE GOSPEL.

'Unto me,' says Paul, 'who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the 'unsearchable riches of Christ.' This is an admirable expression. It indicates at once the spirit of humility which actuated its author, and the excellency of the work in which he was engaged. 'The unsearchable riches of Christ!' The rich fulness of infinite love made known through him, to the world of mankind. The river of divine goodness, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, and from which the ransomed of creation shall drink and never die! We wonder not at this expression of the Apostle. It well accords with his language in the 11th of Romans, where, after speaking of the casting away of the Jews, and the receiving of them again with the fulness of the Gentiles, he thus gives utterance to his thoughts—'O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out—For of him, and through him and to him are all things, to whom be glory forever.' Salvation, to him was not confined to the Jew; it extended to the Gentiles. And for the excellency of his salvation he ardently 'labored and suffered reproach'—for this he counted all else but loss. His capacious mind was filled with this ever-enlarging subject, and the record of his sentiments have come down to us in their vigor and purity.

And better sentiments we know not where to find. They are those which agree with the whole tenor of revelation, and which alone can give peace to every devout christian and well-wisher to the human race. Men may indeed oppose them. The refined philosopher, who has imagined his own high wrought opinions of too much consequence to descend to a level with the religion of the Nazarene, may reject them as of little worth, and as suited only for more limited understandings. The sincere believer in eternal misery may denounce them as dangerous to the welfare of society, in removing the proper inducement to virtue, and giving encouragement to sin. The individual who seeks to keep on favorable terms with popular opinion, may strive to suppress them, (although he agrees to them secretly,) from motives of propriety, and fearing to incur the odium of heresy! But place either of these individuals in a situation where prejudice and motives of mere worldly policy are bidden to keep silence. Take the unbelieving philosopher at a time when the energies of his great soul are at work within him; —when, like a man and a true moral philosopher, he is asking himself the question 'if a man die shall he live again,' and finds no decisive answer save in that book which he so lightly esteems. Take the advocate for the doctrine of endless misery, who is daily living in the belief that he shall, if ever he reaches heaven, behold forever the indescribable torments of those, who, when on earth, were nearest and dearest to his affectionate heart; and who shudders while he meditates on such a scene! Or him who regards the voice of popular opinion more than conscience, when he is removed from the influence of the public voice, and holds communication with himself alone. And ask them if the assurance of life and immortality beyond the grave, as made known in the gospel of Christ, and advocated by the great apostle to the Gentiles, is not a matter of the deepest concern to every human soul; if it is not worth cherishing, worth defending; and if it is not calculated, above every other doctrine, to leave a most salutary influence on the hearts and lives of men? There can be but one answer to these questions. That answer will assuredly be heard in defence of the 'unsearchable riches of Christ!'—*Universalist.*

IMPORTANCE OF NATURAL HISTORY.

It is rather a subject of surprize, that in our general associations and commixtures in life, in times so highly enlightened as the present, when many ancient prejudices are gradually flitting away, as reason and science dawn on mankind, we should meet with so few, comparatively speaking, who have any knowledge of, or take the least interest in natural history; or if the subject obtain a moment's consideration, it has no abiding-place in the mind, being dismissed as the fitting employment of children and inferior capacities. But the natural historian is required to attend to something more than the vagaries of butterflies, and the spinnings of caterpillars; his study, considered abstractedly from the various branches of science which it embraces, is one of the most delightful occupations that can employ the attention of reasoning beings; a beautiful landscape, grateful objects, pleasures received by the eye or the senses, become the common property of all who can enjoy them, being in some measure obvious to every one; but the naturalist must reflect upon hidden things, investigate by comparison, and testify by experience: and living amidst the wonders of creation, it becomes his occupation to note and proclaim such manifestations of wisdom or goodness as may be perceived by him. And perhaps none of the amusements of human life are more satisfactory and dignified, than the investigation and survey of the workings and ways of Providence in this created world of wonders, filled with his never-absent power; it occupies and elevates the mind, is inexhaustible in supply; and, while it furnishes meditation for the closet of the studious, gives to the reflections of the moralizing rambler admiration and delight, and is an engaging companion, that will communicate an interest to every rural walk. We need not live with the humble denizens of the air, the tenants of the woods and hedges, or the grasses of the field; but to pass them by in utter disregard, is to neglect a large portion of rational pleasure open to our view, which may edify and employ many a passing hour, and by easy gradations will often become the source whence flow contemplations of the highest order. Young minds cannot, I should conceive, be too strongly impressed with the simple wonders of creation by which they are surrounded: in the race of life they may be passed by, the occupation of existence may not admit attention to them, or the unceasing cares of the world may smother early attainments—but they can never be injurious—will give a bias to a reasoning mind, and tend, in some after-thoughtful, sober hour, to comfort and to soothe. The little insights that we have obtained into nature's works are many of them the offspring of scientific research; and partial and uncertain as our labors are, yet a brief gleam will lighten the darksome path of the humble inquirer, and give him a momentary glimpse of hidden truths; let not then the idle and the ignorant scoff at him who devotes an unemployed hour,

'No calling left, no duty broke,'

to investigate a moss, a fungus, a beetle, or a shell, in 'ways of pleasantness, and in paths of peace.' They are all the formation of Supreme Intelligence, for a wise and worthy end, and may lead us by gentle gradations to a faint conception of the powers of infinite wisdom. They have calmed and amused some of us worms and reptiles, and possibly bettered us for our change to a new and more perfect order of being.—*Journal of a Naturalist.*

The voice of inspiration has enjoined hospitality as a duty. The dictates of nature concur in pronouncing it a virtue. In the simplicity of ancient times, it flourished as a vigorous plant. The traveller found beneath its wide spreading branches, a shelter from the noon-day sun, and a covert from the storm. But nations in their approaches to refinement, have been prone to neglect its culture. They have hedged it about with ceremonies, and encumbered it with trappings, till its verdure has faded or its roots perished. Like the stripling shepherd, it hath drooped beneath the gorgeous armor of royalty, while it would fain have found among the smooth stones of the brook the strength it needed.

When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire forsakes me; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tomb-stone, my heart melts, with compassion; when I see the tombs of the parents themselves, I reflect how vain it is to grieve for those whom we must quickly follow; when I see kings lying beside those who deposed them, when I behold rival wits placed side by side, or holy men who divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the frivolous competitions, factions, and debates of mankind.—

BUFFALOE HUNTING.

It is related, in the expedition of Long, that on one occasion when the exploring party were riding through a dreary country, enlivened only by vast multitudes of straggling buffaloes, as the wind was blowing from the south, the scent of the party was wafted by it directly over the river Platte; and though a distance of *eight or ten miles*, its progress could be distinctly traced by the consternation it produced among the herds in all quarters. The moment the tainted breeze reached them—so shy were they of strangers—they began running so violently as if closely pursued by mounted hunters. This singular scene continued for the space of some hours.

These immense herds, sometimes five and even ten thousand together, wander over the wide plains of the west, in search of food, usually led on, like the deer, by a male of extraordinary size and courage. While feeding, they are scattered loosely to a great distance; when travelling they form an immense solid column, bearing down all obstacles in its way. No river checks the march; they plunge through in the same order with which they traverse the plains.

It is evident, that in case of a procession of this kind, pursued by hunters, it would be in vain for the foremost to attempt turning back, or even moving a side from nearly a straight line of advance. Of this circumstance the Indians cunningly avail themselves, in such a manner as sometimes to force an entire herd over the brink of a rocky surface some hundred feet below.

When they determine to destroy bison in this way—which is not very frequently—one of their swiftest footed, and most active young men is selected, who is disguised in a bison skin, having the head, ears, and horns adjusted on his own head, so as to make the deception very complete and thus accoutred, he stations himself between the bison herd and some of the precipices, that often extend for several miles along the rivers. The Indians surround the herd as nearly as possible, when, at a given signal, they show themselves and rush forward with loud yells. The animals being alarmed, and seeing no way open but in the direction of the disguised Indian, run towards him, and he, taking to flight, dashes on to the precipice, where he suddenly secures himself in some previously ascertained crevice. The leaders of the herd arrive at the brink—there is no possibility of retreat, no chance of escape: the foremost may for an instant shrink with terror, but the crowd behind, who are terrified by the approaching hunters, rush forward, and are precipitated in the gulf below by which vast numbers are destroyed.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE, NEW-YORK, AND ABEL C. THOMAS, PHILADELPHIA.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, 1833.

BRS. J. BOYDEN AND A. C. THOMAS, Will supply the desks in the Orchard-st. and Greenwich Churches to-morrow. The former at the Orchard-st. Church in the morning, and at the Greenwich Church in the afternoon and evening, and the latter at the Greenwich Church in the morning, and at the Orchard-st. Church in the afternoon and evening.

FIVE CHAPTERS ON PARTIALISM.

CHAPTER I.

Caleb Comfort was a native of Connecticut. His parents were among the most prominent and respectable members of the Congregational Church in the town of Saybrook; and, as may naturally be supposed, deemed it a religious duty to bring up their son in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord"—in other words, carefully to instruct him in the doctrinal principles of Calvinism. In consequence of the attention given to his spiritual education, Caleb was enabled, before he was twelve years of age, to repeat every article of faith in the "Saybrook Platform," and to yield the appended reply to every question in the "Shorter Catechism."

It is well known that the inhabitants of "the land of steady habits," have ever entertained a religious reverence for the opinions, laws and customs of their pious progenitors. It was even so with the parents of Caleb Comfort. While they honestly paid their taxes, and were obedient to the authority of the civil rulers, they also observed the spirit of obsolete enactments—assigning as a sufficient reason, that *their forefathers were pious and wise.*

I mention this particular in order to account, in a satisfactory manner, for a few facts:—Though Caleb had naturally a fine ear for music, he was not allowed to possess any instrument beside a jews-harp; his hair was always 'cut round according to a cap;' and his mother was never known to kiss him on the Sabbath. It is believed that he once endeavored to persuade his parents to give food and lodging to a Quaker; but this was considered such a criminal outbreaking of human depravity, and so utterly repugnant to the laws of their ancestors, that the lad was suitably chastized. In all this they sinned not, nor came short of their views of the glory of God.*

Having arrived to the years of manhood, Caleb received the parental benediction, bade adieu to the abode of his fathers, and journeyed to the land of strangers, as did Jacob of old, "to seek his fortune." Providence directed his steps to Lancaster county, Pa.; and being well pleased with the face of the country and the manners of the people, he fixed the place of his future residence a few miles distant from the Chieques Alonga. By honesty, industry, and frugality, he speedily rose in the estimation of the people, became a member of the Presbyterian church located in the vicinity, and in a few years, intermarried with a wealthy and respectable family.

Caleb was zealous, and his zeal in the advancement of the cause of religion, so strongly recommended him to the especial regard of the saints, that he was chosen and ordained as a Deacon of the Church before he was five and thirty years of age.

Deacon Comfort was by no means an ordinary man—nor was his appearance ordinary. His solemn physiognomy, broad skirted coat and ample breeches, together with his shoe and knee buckles, evinced that he entertained a proper sense of the dignity and importance of his spiritual office; and that he felt it his duty to be arrayed in becoming apparel, and maintain a corresponding deportment.

They who are aware of the powerful influence of early prepossessions, will not be surprised to learn, that not even Parson Job Jenkins more firmly believed and contended for the pure principles of Calvinism, than did Deacon Caleb Comfort. At the period of this narrative, viz. in 1827, Arminio-Calvinism was unknown in the Presbyterian church. With Parson Jenkins and Deacon Comfort, the Sovereignty of God, and his free distinguishing grace in the salvation of sinners, were fundamental articles of faith; and it was consequently with no small regret that they perceived the rapid spread of the Arminian heresy. "Revivals of Religion" were multiplying on the right hand and on the left; a Methodist Camp Meeting had been recently held in the vicinity, and numbers had united with the Society in charge of Elder Simon Smith.

When the latter circumstance was communicated to Deacon Comfort, his spirit was moved within him, and his soul was melted because of trouble. "I will visit the Parson," said he; and he was soon seen bending his way across the fields to the parsonage.

So soon as the occasion of this unexpected visit was made known, the Parson laid down his book and lit his pipe. "I am verily astonished," said he, that men can be so deluded as to suppose that the Leopard can change his spots or the Ethiopian his skin. Having denied the Sovereignty of the Almighty, they have in effect erected a Babel, in which they imagine themselves secure from the overflowing scourge. But God will take the crafty in their craftiness. Denying the free distinguishing grace of Christ in the great work of salvation, they have persuaded themselves that they can save themselves by 'creature works.' And thus they have made a covenant with death, they have formed an agreement with hell! My soul, come thou not into their secret—unto their assembly be thou not united."

"It is even so," added the Deacon with a sigh. "The carnal mind is full of gall and wormwood. It is at enmity with God and with his holy decrees. It would take the crown from the Savior's head, and make the Supreme Being dependant on the creature for the exercise of his divine will and nature. Why, then, should we be surprised that Elder Smith, through the instigation of the Devil, has thus perverted the testimony of Jesus?

"There is much justice in your question," responded the Parson, "but I must still express my astonishment at the amazing blindness of men living in a Christian land. Even the *heathen* allow God to be Supreme and Sovereign; and *they* have no other than the light of nature to direct them. But in this land of Gospel light—in this land of Bibles—to deny the free distinguishing grace of God——— 'wo unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward;' they shall utterly perish in the gainsaying of Core."

"The Lord preserve us," exclaimed the Deacon: "the Lord preserve us from hardness of heart, and keep his elect ones as in the hollow of his hand."

To this pious ejaculation, the parson responded 'Amen;' and after a few moments continued his remarks. "I clearly foresee how this matter will terminate. We hold that all for whom Christ died will infallibly be saved; and Elder Smith, as you inform me, teaches that Christ died for all. These two points are strongly insisted on by some persons in M*******, who call themselves Universalians; they are turning many away from the true faith; and unless something is done to put down this doctrine of a general ransom, the doctrine of the Universalians will and must prevail."

"I think," said the Deacon, "that Dr. Owen has written a work on the principles of the Universalians. Is he not very pointed against them?"

"He is a very strong and clear writer," responded the Parson; "but he argues chiefly against the general ransom, or universal atonement. He contends, and justly, too, that if Christ made a universal atonement, and if salvation be yet suspended on the whims of the human will, *it is still possible that all may be damned!* But the Universalians in M. take a different course. They contend for the universal atonement, and also for the great truth that Christ did not die in vain: that having 'tasted death for every man,' every man will eventually be saved—inasmuch as, short of this, Jesus cannot 'see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.' In order to destroy their conclusions it is only necessary to show that Christ did not make a universal atonement—and this point Dr. Owen most conclusively and pointedly proves."

"Have you a copy of Owen's work?" inquired the Deacon.

"Yes: a new edition of it has just been published in Philadelphia. It is recommended by Dr. Ely and others, as being 'worth its weight in gold.'* I cordially subscribe to their opinion. I have lately received several copies of the work, and make you a present of a copy."

"Thank you," said the Deacon; "I doubt not I shall be edified in the perusal of it. But what shall be done in relation to Elder Smith and the influence of his doctrines?"

"I will preach on the subject next Sabbath morning," said the Parson.

A. C. T.

PROFESSION AND PRACTICE.

We hear much lamentation in the christian world at the present day over the lost and perishing condition of unbelievers. Every effort is made to enlist the feelings and excite the benevolence of christians in their behalf—to collect funds for sending forth ministers and missionaries to instruct and enlighten them in the truths of religion and of virtue, and gather them into the christian fold, "snatching them as brands from the burnings" of a future and endless hell of inconceivable torments. This is particularly the case in reference to those out of the pale of christian privileges—out of a christian land, or, as it is termed, "those who do not live in a land of gospel light and liberty." The heathen make a heavy draft upon their charities and sympathies. It is constantly rung in our ears that thousands and millions of them are almost daily and even hourly sinking down to the regions of never ending despair, merely for the want of christian instruction—because of their ignorance of the princi-

* The following are Extracts from the primitive judicial code (commonly called the *Blue Laws*) of Connecticut. "No one shall play on any instrument of music, except the drum, the trumpet, and the jews-harp.—Every male shall have his hair cut round according to a cap.—No food or lodging shall be offered to a Quaker, Adamite, or other heretic.—No woman shall kiss her child on the Sabbath or fasting days."

* Prefixed to an Edition of "Owen on Redemption" published in Philadelphia in 1827, is a recommendatory notice of the work, signed by E. S. Ely, D. D., G. B. Livingston, G. T. Bedell, S. B. Wylie, D. D., W. E. Ashton, W. M. Engles, G. C. Potts. The recommendation is dated "Feb. 15, 1827." "It has long been a very scarce work; and, *in our judgment, is worth its weight in gold.*" Thus speak—or rather thus *spake*—the clergymen named. It is a reasonable inference, that they heartily believed and approved the sentiments of Dr. Owen, at the time they signed the recommendation. John L. Dagg, W. Balantine, W. T. Brantley, S. B. Allen, A. Green, D. D., J. J. Janeway, D. D., and W. L. McCalla, also highly recommended the work, under the same date. The reader is requested to keep these things in remembrance.——T.

ples and requirements of the gospel of Christ. But it may be well, even in these days and in this land of boasted piety and virtue, for us to look about and compare *profession* with *practice*—to try "spirits and see whether they be of God." No single child of humanity ever yet arrived to that degree of perfection that he was *safe* from the common frailties of our nature—*secure* from all liability to err either in opinion or conduct.

Let us look then to the rigidly righteous of our day, those who claim to possess all the virtue, all the godliness, all the *religion* in our land, and see how far they are in advance of these very heathen, these poor benighted idolators, who draw so largely on their compassion. Take for example the principle of honesty; and this is a fundamental in all christian excellence—it is the grand point on which all rests, for in the sentiment of scripture, "what dost he require of thee, O man, but to *deal justly*, love mercy, and walk humbly," &c.; and who is to suffer in the comparison?

The stern integrity of the untutored savage of the forest, is proverbial among men, and might well draw a blush from many a professing christian. We have seen it stated but cannot now point to the authority, that once with the aborigines of this country, if an Indian desired to leave his wigwam, he had only to place a billet of wood against his door, as a signal that he was absent, and his effects were held sacred. Such was the nice sense of integrity with these children of nature that they would sooner part with life than be guilty of a breach of that faith reposed in each other by their tribe at large. We have also recently met with a paragraph, exhibiting the honesty of the Turks, extracted from a work entitled "Sketches of Turkey in 1831." We copy it for the reader's perusal. The writer says,

"Returning home this evening at a late hour I observed many persons asleep on mats, in the open air, before their respective shops, which were lit up, and apparently ready to receive customers. This affords a pleasing evidence of the good faith and honesty of the people. I have noticed a similar circumstance in the bazaars and shops of the metropolis. In these places during the day, if the shopman wishes to step out, or to indulge in a nap, he ties a string across the door, or throws a cloth over a few articles near the street, and this signifies that the shop is shut, a hint which is universally understood and respected. If you purchase an article, the seller of course endeavours to obtain the highest price; but the Turkish dealer shows much more conscience than his Jewish or Christian neighbors. When a piece of money is put into his hands to change, he returns the whole amount, and leaves it to the purchaser to deduct the price of the article. When it is recollected that the money of this empire is counterfeited to a great extent, the honesty of this procedure is apparent; he not only confides in your good faith, but exhibits his own in no small degree."

Now if this is a fair specimen of the honesty of the Turkish people, and the traits of Indian character alluded to above, are a just exhibition of their integrity prior to their intercourse with *civilized* nations, what a reproof do they afford to the boastings of many, very many in the christian world. Apply the scripture test, and how far *behind* ourselves should we find the aborigines, or the poor despised Turk, in the christian requirement of *honesty?* Let a householder in a christian land leave his dwelling, simply guarded by a billet of wood at the door—let a merchant sleep by his wares, or leave his store with merely a string across the door way, or a light cloth covering over his goods, and we need not speak of the *safety* attending these measures. Daily experience shows the consequences, and that even locks, bolts, and bars cannot secure individuals in their rights and property.

We do not make this comparison to discredit christianity, or present these things as the CONSEQUENCES *of christianity*, (we cherish it too highly,) but rather as the best evidence in the world of the WANT *of christian influences*. People may boast of the rapid progress of christianity, of the mighty victories it is obtaining over unbelief and sin, by the *number* of its adherents, and the *loud professions* of its advocates, but can we rest securely in these criterions? What, we ask, is the virtue of a name? Does not daily experience show that the profession of religion is prostituted to the most unholy purposes? Its more zealous partizans have been so long in the practice of judging and receiving by profession, instead of practice, that they in fact offer a kind of premium to the unprincipled—a direct inducement for them to hide their deformity in the ample folds of the profession. It affords them a securer field to practice their iniquity; for the *world*, as it is termed, will judge them by their acts.

Sects and parties have arisen in the christian church, each striving for the mastery, standing as it were with out-stretched arms, to receive any and every thing that would enlist under their sectarian banners; marshalling and drilling their forces, with all the art and management ever exhibited by a military chieftain on the field of battle—resorting to every measure of human policy that could be conceived of, to preserve and extend sectarian influence. Even if an individual deviates from the path of rectitude, the question seems not what does *duty* require, but what course will be the most *politic* as a party? In what situation, *in* or *out of* our connexion will he be the most injury to us? And thus many a gross violation of every principle of christian honesty and integrity is countenanced and supported, for fear of party losses and injury. Now we can readily conceive of the natural consequences of such a course of practice. *We in fact* SEE *them, in abundance.* As is justly said in an excellent article, (What is Religion?) on our first page, when we hear that a person is *religious*, we too frequently need to inquire is he *honest?*

How important is it then, that the christian name should be redeemed from the reproaches thus cast upon it by professed friends, and how much iniquity might be prevented, by sweeping away every refuge, of this nature, for the unprincipled. Strip the designing of their masks—countenance none only as their *conduct*, in a moral point of view, recommends them, however warm their professions, and ardent their zeal, and men would soon find it for their *interest* to deal *justly*, aside from the happiness resulting to themselves individually, and would soon become virtuous from habit. We might then rationally and consistently talk of converting the heathen—of christianizing the rude tenants of the forest, and we could accompany our exhortations with the strongest and most powerful evidence, that of *example.*

What if we cannot, as a sect or body, compare with others in numbers, those we *do* have will be possessed of clean hands and pure hearts. Let every denomination practice upon this principle, and the unchristian strife which is now quite too prevalent in the world, would be done away with at once, and the most beneficial effects to society realized. I would rather have one honest, conscientious professor of religion with me, than be surrounded with a host whom I could only retain by the eternal din of policy, policy, policy, in all my movements.

Reader, whatever may be the practice of others, let it be ours to judge the tree by its fruits, and whenever and wherever we can find traits of christian character, let us respect them according to their worth, even though we find them in the person of the despised Mussulman or with the untutored Savage. P.

DIVINE GOODNESS.

Goodness is so prominent an attribute of the Divine nature—indeed it is so obviously essential to His existence—that all concede the truth of the testimony, "The Lord is good to all." Besure, there are many who deny the eternity of this goodness, as extended to *individuals*—and others contend that it will ever be extended to all, as *the whole*, irrespective of the particular good of the parts—but still the goodness of God is universally maintained, in one way or another.

Partialists frequently affirm, that the Lord is good to all, in making the offers of grace, in providing means for their salvation, in not cutting them down as cumberers of the ground, &c. &c. This is all very well—but would it not be better to go back a little farther, and ask this question: Was the Lord good to all in so creating them, as that endless misery might be their doom? It is all very well to allow that God has put the means at their disposal for escaping this doom—but the question is, Would it not have been a stronger evidence of His goodness to have so created them, as that endless misery would be absolutely impossible?

The Universalist rejoices in believing, that the Divine goodness toward man, has been, still is, and ever will be, manifested in every act and dispensation of Providence. God has not created us to be the sport of chance. He has not suspended the destiny of his children on the fickleness and caprice of the human will. "He has set the bounds of things that they may not pass his commandment." His goodness commenced, his goodness has thus far prosecuted, and his goodness will finish, the great and glorious design of creation—the happiness of the being created in the image of God. A. C. T.

THINGS WORTHY OF CONSIDERATION.

We *like* to see brethren of one great family meet together in harmony, and in all their intercourse, both in the retirement of the domestic circle and before the world, exhibit that kindness, forbearance and long suffering which alone becometh brethren.

We *like* to see them zealously affected in a good cause, ever ready to aid and support each other in all laudable measures for the advancement of truth or virtue, or of their individual or collective interests.

We *like* to see them at all times modest and unassuming, and if they must differ, be ever ready to put the most favorable construction on opposing conduct—be always inclined to esteem others as highly as themselves.

We always *like* to see firmness and decision on fundamental principles, but at the same time the exercise of that charity which would award to others the privilege of the same firmness and decision that it asks for itself.

In short, we *like* to see every one, in matters pertaining to religion as well as the ordinary concerns of life, practice, as far as may be, upon the golden rule of our Savior, "Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you."

But we equally *dislike* to see brethren fall out by the way, wrangling and contending for "trifles light as air," and omitting the "weightier matters—judgment, mercy, truth."

We *dislike* to see members of this family make loud professions of piety, and an expansive benevo-

lence that would gather within its folds the universe of God, and still hunt down an opposing brother with a seeming spirit of bitterness and revenge that would disgrace the most abandoned.

We *dislike* to see the least *appearance* of a disposition to create and build up party strifes, on private prejudices, or to sacrifice general interests, the general good on the altar of private animosities.

We *dislike* to see isolated individual expressions harped upon year in and year out, and an attempt to make a whole body answerable therefor, or individual improprieties seized upon and presented to the community in all their glowing colors, and then placed to the account of a whole profession. We can discover herein little of that "justice," that love of "mercy," and that "humility," required of the follower of the Savior. Even should a brother err, we have still the assurance "Blessed are the peace makers," and it certainly can be no improvement in the case, for ourselves to perpetrate a *greater* wrong, with the view of correcting the *lesser* one of our brother.

We *dislike* to see individuals laboring as it were for their very lives to create divisions where all should be union—to build up middle walls of partition between mankind, when the great design of the Gospel of our Savior was to sweep away every vestige of these artificial distinctions, and cement us as a band of brothers.

In fine, we *dislike* any indication of a strife of who shall be greatest among men. Rather let us have that humility that would take the "lowermost seat," that peradventure the master of the feast might invite us up. Let believers in the final reconciliation of all things to God, above all others, practice upon this precept, for if we cannot expect it here, we know not where to look for it. Without it, their profession will be like "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." P.

CLERICAL TITLES.

William Worrall, Evangelist, of Glasgow, in addressing J. Jamieson, a Partialist teacher, says—"Excuse me, that I call you not Reverend; it is not out of disrespect, but I find that Reverend and Holy is the name of Jehovah; and therefore I cannot, in conscience, give such titles to man."

Neil Douglass, Evangelist, of the same place, was also emphatically opposed to giving flattering titles to man. A Mr. Husband, in an elegy written on the demise of this worthy ambassador of Christ, has the following stanzas:

"Ye Scotsmen of ilk rank and trade,
In Highlands, or in Lowlands bred,
Gin ye hae ony tears to shed,
Them dinna save:
For poor Neil Douglass, cauld and dead,
Lies in his grave.

"I ought to call him *Reverend* Neil,
But that's a term ye ken fu' weel,
He hated as he did the Deil:
Sae let it pass;
He's left us now—the honest chiel;
All flesh is grass."

A. C. T.

SOUTHOLD, L. I.

We are much gratified in perceiving that our friends at Southold, have in good earnest set about measures for a more effectual advancement of their cause in that place. We have just received a copy of the Preamble and Constitution recently adopted by them, as a preparatory step to the erection of a suitable house of worship. We are about printing a quantity, in pamphlet form, for distribution in the vicinity. The present appears to be merely an organization for procuring the necessary funds to erect a house, leaving the particular organization of the *Society* till after the house is prepared. The Preamble and Constitution provides that the house shall be owned and governed by Universalists, no person being eligible as Trustee who does not acknowledge the universality of the grace of God, and the final holiness and happiness of all men, though the house shall be held free for the admission of all denominations of christians, when not in use by the Universalists. The first meeting for the appointment of Trustees, to be held so soon as $1500 are subscribed. There are many stable friends in Southold, and they are blessed with the ministrations of an able and worthy brother, (Thomas Miller.) Go on brethren, steadily but perseveringly, and you cannot but meet with abundant success. P.

FIVE CHAPTERS ON PARTIALISM.

The sketch of Deacon Caleb Comfort, by our associate Br. Thomas, commenced in this paper, will be completed in the 4 succeeding Nos. of the Messenger, one chapter to each No. The portrait will be found so true to life, that we doubt not the reader will be amply compensated for the space they will occupy. P.

Br. T. B. T. of Lowell, is informed that the communication of which he speaks in a recent letter, was never received by us. Our silence, therefore, could not arise from causes hinted at. We are ever happy to hear from him, and he will accept our best thanks for the favor he has furnished us in this No. We wish many other brethren would also remember us in this way.

NEW AGENTS.

John K. Wright, having removed from Easton, Pa. *Jonathan Wood* and *William Fishback* will act as agents for the Messenger in that place and vicinity.

Lazarus Whipple, will act as agent in Shandaken, Ulster Co. and vicinity.

EXPOSITOR AND REVIEW.

No. 4, for July, of this valuable work is just received. Contents—Principles of interpreting the language of Scripture, The term Mystery, as used in the N. Testament, both by the editor, H. Ballou, 2d—What is religion? (may be found on our first page) by Br. Wm. A. Drew, editor of the Christian Intelligencer, Maine, as we judge from the initials—Reserve of Universalists, in urging the denunciations of the Scriptures, Review of Streeter's Familiar Conversations, both by the editor—State of the doctrine and denomination of Universalists, by Br. T. Whittemore, of the Trumpet—Counsels to the Young, (on our first page) by Miss J. H. Kinney, Sheshequin.

CAUTION.

We learn (says the Magazine and Advocate) that *Moses P. Morgan* has lately left Ohio, and is now travelling eastwardly through this state. Respectable and responsible men in Ohio, near where he has resided for the last three years, inform us to be on our guard and admonish societies to beware of employing him as a preacher till certain things touching his *moral character* are explained.

Original.

THE MORALITY OF THE GOSPEL.

The Christian religion owes its superiority and beauty, in a measure, to the excellency of those moral precepts and instructions with which it abounds, and which it is continually forcing upon the attention of its followers. In this respect it equals, and far excels, every system which man in his vanity and pretended wisdom has ever attempted to establish; it rises triumphant above the cunningly devised fables of the world, and, by universal consent, bears away the palm of victory. Every one who will, free from the bias of determined opposition to the doctrine of the blessed Jesus—free from the subtleties of scepticism, and with a mind open to conviction, and ready and willing to receive the truth, on whatever ground and in whatever garb it may appear—he, who will thus sit him down to a calm, candid and meditative perusal of the holy volume of revelation, must arise from it fully satisfied that it is eminently calculated to advance the cause of pure and undefiled religion. He must allow that it is admirably suited to the nature and condition of the human race, aiming to purify and elevate the affections of the soul, to fit man for the enjoyment of higher, more refined and godlike pleasures—in a word, to make him holier, and of course happier. The directions, admonitions, and exhortations with which it abounds, are such, if observed, as will advance the best good of those concerned, regulate their conduct and pursuits, guide them into the ways of righteousness and truth, and elevate to a higher standard of purity the general character and condition of society.

We do not make these statements for the mere matter of boast, nor for the sake of words; it is the simple, unvarnished, yet sublime and glorious truth. It is a superiority belonging to the Christian system alone, contended for not only by its friends, but admitted even by its most bitter and virulent enemies. Many a philippic against the religion of Jesus Christ has been closed by the voluntary and unasked compliment that it possesses an intrinsic value which others cannot in justice claim. Many a heated foe has been heard to say, after exhausting his store of invectives, "well, it is after all, a good religion enough, it inculcates nothing but the purest morality, the noblest virtues, and if we all lived up to it, I believe we should be better off." This admission on the part of those who are its avowed enemies, is important, because it affords a demonstration of its truth. There is indeed something that discovers itself to the mind in the study of the sacred scriptures, which speaks conviction to the most unwilling, and tells that none but a perfect God could have laid down a system of morals so beautiful, so elevating, so heavenly. There is too much in the record of the gospel precepts and principles that wars with the natural desires, and passions, and wishes of the human heart, to suffer us to believe that it is the work of man, or any earthly fabrication. No, man is not accustomed to oppose himself so plainly and positively, to forbid the gratification of his cherished appetites, to establish rules, and exhort the observance of them, when this comes in point blank contact with his propensities to the contrary. No, I repeat again, tell me not that this is in accordance with his general conduct; there is too much of self denial here. The exalted character of the gospel morality, the purity of principle and motive that mark its doctrines, speak in language that no one can misunderstand, or gainsay, that its origin is from above, its author, the great eternal.

Let any rational and reflecting individual, view the christian religion in this light, and then consider the extraordinary measures which were brought into operation by Christ and his apostles; the astonishing, not to say miraculous, means by which it has been preserved through ages of the most merciless and unrelenting persecution, and finally placed upon a sure and immovable basis in defiance of all the opposition of principalities and powers; let any one, we say, consider its exalted character, and take into the account these events of its past history, and he will be constrained to admit that "it is the Lord's doings." T. B. T.

RELIGIOUS NOTICE.

Br. S. J. Hillyer, will preach in Newtown, Wednesday evening 14th inst; in Bethel, Thursday evening, 15th inst; in Danbury, Sunday 18th; in South-East, Monday evening 19th; in Sing-Sing, Tuesday evening 20th.

FROM THE EXPOSITOR.

COUNSELS TO THE YOUNG.

Oh place not too fondly, my daughter, thy trust
In the treasures that perish, the things which are dust;
For change will o'ershadow thy way with his wing,
And pluck from thy path every blossom of spring.

Pour out thy affections on nothing beneath:
'Tis a wasting of feelings, a savor of death;
Few days, and thy dearest shall wither and die,
And thy bright visions vanish like clouds from the sky.

Yet, vain are my counsels—the youthful and free,
With their warm kindling hopes, ever reckless will be;
Alas! 'tis their nature, unmindful, to cast
Scarce a thought to the future, or glance at the past.

Said I 'twas their nature? Yes, daughter, but thou,
With youth's brightest bloom on thy radiant brow,
Draw near, while I whisper a thought that will give
Thy young heart a strength every change to outlive.

As sunlight will steal from the roses their hue,
When a blight lurks beneath their fair foldings of dew—
As streams from the mountains unceasingly glide
Till their waters are mingled with ocean's blue tide—

So riseth to heaven life's perishless part,
When decay is at work in the depths of the heart;
So a power, though unseen, ever gathereth on high
The things which, on earth, are too lovely to die.

Then peace, oh my daughter, whatever thy lot—
Beams the sunshine of fortune upon thee or not—
Peace, peace, to thy heart, for the dreams of its love
Will be blest with a holy fulfilment above.

J. H. K.

MAN A RELIGIOUS BEING.

The worship of some divinity is coeval and connatural with the existence of man. Wherever the light of the sun has shone—wherever the beauties and the glories and wonders of creation have been seen, the footsteps of a God have been traced, and observing man has recognized the handy work of a divinity. Go to the rudest and most uncultivated age of man; visit the most barbarous climes that have ever been explored, where the dim light of nature alone had been seen—where the illuminations of science and the sun of supernatural revelation had never shone—where the temple for public worship had never been reared—nor the pious anthems of a cultivated and chastened devotion ever ascended—or on the green banks of the gentle meandering Euphrates, or by the side of the dark rolling Ganges, or along the stealthy waters and sultry clime of the Niger, or amid the polar regions of the north, or far to the west, where the red savage pursues the bounding game along the wooded banks of Columbia—there you will find the impress of the deity enstamped on his offspring, and the *child looking around for its father.*

And, though rude may be his manners and crude his conceptions, there will you find him prostrating himself in adoration, or in some form or other paying religious homage to a power which, though unseen, is felt to be above and around him. He knows that he has a being, that he had a beginning, that he did not create himself, and hence, that there is a power, a being, prior and superior to himself. And according to his conceptions of the nature and character of that being, will be his feelings and acts of devotion and religious homage.

We can see the tokens of his goodness, and read in letters of gold his boundless love in all the vast range of creation. We behold them in the mechanism of nature, in the heaving tides of the ocean, in the lofty mountains and wide spread valleys of the earth, in the beauties of the landscape, the gurgling fountains of water, the fragrance of the air, the flowery decorations of spring, the green and luxuriant summer, the rich golden harvest of autumn, and the white robes of winter—in the golden beams of the noon-tide sun, in the silver rays of night's gentle queen, in the star-spangled firmament of evening, in which the Father of mercies seems to look down upon us with myriads of sparkling eyes of love. They are alike visible in the nice gradation of being, from the groveling reptile to the burning seraph, in the subserviency of all to each, and each to all, while man holds the middle grade and forms the connecting link by which, though bound to earth and inferior objects, for a season, he is indissolubly linked to angels and to God, by the intellectual powers and faculties with which he is endowed.—*Dr. Skinner.*

EXTRACT.

Life is full of mysteries. If we were wandering through the purlieus of a vast palace, and found here and there a closed door, or an inaccessible entrance, over which the word, 'MYSTERY' was written, how would our curiosity be awakened by the inscription! Life is such a wandering; the world is such a structure; and over many a door forbidding all entrance, and over many a mazy labyrinth, is written the startling inscription, that tells us of our ignorance, and announces to us unseen and unimaginable wonders. The ground we tread upon is not dull cold soil, not the mere paved way, on which the footsteps of the weary and busy are hasting, not the mere arena on which the war of mercantile competition is waged; but we tread on enchanted ground.' The means of communication with this outward scene, are all mysteries. Anatomists may explain the structure of the eye and ear, but they leave inexplicable things behind; seeing and hearing are still mysteries. The organ that collects within it the agitated waves of the air, the chambers of sound that lie beyond it, after all dissection and analysis, are still labyrinths and regions of mystery. And that little orb, the eye, which gathers in the boundless landscape at a glance, which in an instant measures the near and the distant, the vast and the minute, which brings knowledge from ten thousand objects in one commanding act of vision—what a mystery is that!

And then, if the soul communicates with the outward world; through mysterious processes, what power has that world; its objects, its events, its changes, its varying hues, its many toned voices, what mysterious power have they, to strike the secret springs of the soul within and awake admiration and reverence, towards that POWER, who spreadeth out the heavens like a curtain; who layeth the beams of his chambers in the great and wide sea; and in whose Almighty hand, is the round world, and all they that dwell therein!

AN EXTRACT.

An habitual thinker cannot be permanently happy. He may revel with a fleeting pleasure—he may float in a delicious revery—he may feel blissfully for a moment that his cup of joy is full. His fancy may expand with an inspiration, or his bosom thrill with the triumph and the rapture of a requited passion; but these sensations scarcely linger longer in his bosom than the rose-light of the setting sun on the summit of the hill—and in proportion to the intensity of the excitement, will be the subsequent depression of his spirits. Place such an one upon the proudest eminence—realize all his fondest wishes—let his very dreams become bright realities around him, and rejoicing will not be without a shudder. His mind will be crossed with melancholy forbodings—so much for reflection.

It thus frequently happens that they who are most envied, suffer under the operation of thoughts and feelings invisible to the unreflecting world. Who are more envied than the great—the profound statesman—the convincing and spirit-stirring orator—the immortal poet—the painter—and the novelist, who surprize and captivate the million? While regarding their splendid works, and the effects of them upon others, who can refrain from yearning to be like their authors? How intense the desire to grasp their dazzling powers, to become, like them, objects of delight, admiration, and wonder? Yet how many of these beings are unhappy! The wreathes which bind their temples are full of hidden thorns. They are racked with hours of keen and gloomy meditation. Their very blessings disguise dark sad things which the shouting crowd know not of. Oh, the rugged, cruel influences, gloomy as Erebus, inexorable as fate, concealed under the glancing surface of society! Genius is too often but an altar on which its victim is offered a splendid sacrifice, dying in radiance. * * * *

PROSPECTUS

For the 3d vol. of the Messenger, to be published simultaneously at New-York and Philadelphia, under the title of

NEW-YORK CHRISTIAN MESSENGER AND PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSALIST.

The proposed change in the manner of publication of the Messenger, induces us thus early to present proposals for the *Third* Volume. No essential change will be made in the course of the paper, unless it may be to avail ourselves of every possible opportunity of increasing the talent and interest in its columns. It will, therefore, in the language it has ever held forth to the world, continue to "plead the cause of a slandered and persecuted denomination of Christians the UNIVERSALISTS;" endeavor to inspire confidence among its friends, and to induce as far as possible the thoughtless and unconcerned, and even opposers, to come forward into the field of examination and "reason together" on the great and glorious doctrines of a *world's reconciliation to God.*

Its motto may be, perhaps, the surest index of its character. It breathes neither wrath nor fury to the children of men, but on the contrary it points to a peaceful messenger on the mountain top, proclaiming "good tidings," and "publishing peace." "*How beautiful upon the mountains, are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace.*"

With unfeigned gratitude to the Universalist public for the many tokens of approbation bestowed upon our paper for the near two years it has now been in existence, we submit these Propsals for the third volume, referring simply to the past, as a pledge for the future.

CONDITIONS.

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P. PRICE,
Publisher and Proprietor

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